11:Levine Z-4,5 (1958-1961)1965 MP5 Amhara MP5

New Agents of Socialization

In Amhara society, as we have seen, the agents of primary socialization—parents and older relatives—likewise prepare the young person for adulthood, by teaching him work skills, arranging his marriage, and conditioning him to the mores of adult society. In changing Ethiopia, these traditional managers of adolescence are unable to impart the skills and values needed for a modern life. Their role as agents of secondary socialization is taken for the most part by teachers and peers in the government schools.

Schools at the post-elementary levels in Ethiopia have been staffed mainly by teachers brought under contract from foreign countries—chiefly Canada, England, India, Sweden, and the United States. Together with a growing number of Ethiopians who have studied abroad, and some graduates of Ethiopian colleges, these teachers have been the principal medium through which Ethiopian adolescents have been exposed to Western culture, not only by teaching subjects like science and English literature, and skills like drafting and stenography, but also by imparting attitudes and values important for Ethiopia's modernization.

High among these new values is that of rewarding an individual solely on the basis of performance. Although the long arm of "connections" has occasionally reached into the school system, to save, for example, the relative of some dignitary from dismissal despite substandard performance, the day-to-day operation of school life follows general standards which are applied without regard to family connections, class position, or tribal and religious affiliations.* The degree to which the students have accepted the sovereignty of universal norms is reflected in their response to the question: "In general, what will help you most to get ahead, ability or 'pull' (that is, personal contacts or influence, through family or friends)?" Nine-tenths of the students at both secondary and college levels expressed the belief that ability would help them more to get ahead.

Another modern value promoted by the school staffs is that of Ethiopian nationalism. In the elementary schools outside of Addis Ababa, pupils tend to associate chiefly with members of their own tribe and religion. In the post-elementary schools, they inevitably have considerable intercourse with members of other groups. On the basis of our sample, the ethnic composition of the post-elementary schools may be estimated as in Table 2. This ethnic pluralism would seem at first to intensify particularistic sentiments among

[TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 115]

* This reflects deliberate government policy. Before the occupation, sons of noblemen were segregated at Tafari Makonnen School and received preferential treatment. After the liberation, the Emperor not only discontinued this policy but took pains to eliminate favoritism in the schools to a large degree.

11:Levine Z-4,5 (1958-1961)1965 MP5 Amhara MP5

might be expected, the incidence of disapproval was highest among the students of the Gondar secondary school (fifty-eight per cent), whose parents are presumably more traditionalist than those of the Addis Ababa boys, and the students of the technical school (fifty-six per cent), whose occupational interests, involving manual labor and technical skills, are felt to resemble those artisan pursuits traditionally disesteemed by the Amhara.

Time is on the side of the students. As Ethiopia develops and education spreads, the advantages of prolonged training and modern occupations will become increasingly apparent to the parents. For some time to come, however, their resentment of the dependence of youth on foreigners and Western-educated Ethiopians for occupational guidance will continue to generate social tensions and impede the socialization process.

The harmonious pattern of preparation for adult work roles found in traditional Amhara society has been further disrupted under the new school system at at least two points: the point at which occupational commitments are made, and the point of entry into the work force.

The modern adolescent is supposed to choose which of several kinds of schools, representing a variety of vocational commitments, he wishes to enter upon successful completion of the eighth-grade exam. Quite often his choice is dictated by wholly irrelevant factors. For example, it may be made on the basis of which of the available schools promises the best standard of living.[19] Or it may be made for him by the school system, for one finds cases where the student's preferences are disregarded and he is placed in whatever school and vocational program happens to be able to accommodate him.

Even when the student's choice is relatively free from such extraneous determinants, however, it is usually difficult for him to make a meaningful decision. Eight grades of a rudimentary curriculum is hardly an adequate basis for choosing from a variety of unfamiliar vocations. So it is "fate" that guides most youngsters into one or another of the secondary school programs. The problem of choice recurs, for a much smaller number, when commitments are again required for entrance into the colleges. At this point meaningful decisions are often made, but perhaps more often they are spun from a skein of bewilderment. One secondary school graduate summed up the situation by saying, "Foreigners frequently ask young educated Ethiopians, 'What do you want to become?' How do we know? This whole business of *choosing* is entirely new to us, and we know very little about the alternatives that we have now. It is all very confusing."

So far the modernizing sector has provided little, beyond vocational pamphlets in the school libraries and an occasional school debate on the respective values of different occupations, to help orient the students on these matters.

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Programs of vocational guidance and counseling have not yet been instituted.* Students who manage to form clear and definite ambitions also suffer for want of help, if for some reason they have been shunted away from the appropriate training program, or have been deprived of opportunities to prepare adequately for the vocations to which they aspire. Two research findings bear on this. In one study it was found that "few secondary school administrators when questioned are aware of the ambitions and desires of their students," and that less than twenty per cent of the group of secondary school students surveyed felt they had received training "suitable to their ambitions."[20] In my own survey it appeared that fewer than twenty per cent of the secondary school students expect to enter the occupation they actually want to.

In addition to this discontinuity between childhood experience and the hitherto unknown necessity of making some sort of vocational choice, modern adolescence also involves a sharp break between the experience of post-elementary school and the process of getting on a payroll. Here the Ethiopian youth faces the problems of students everywhere as they leave school for the "real world." In at least two respects, however, his dilemma is more acute than that of his counterpart in Western societies. Because virtually all jobs are controlled by the government, and because the government is still organized along traditional lines, the Ethiopian graduate must suddenly forget the universalistic criteria of school and acclimate himself to the traditional pattern of ingratiating oneself with those in positions of power—a pattern referred to as *daj ţenät* —if he is to gain and retain a decent job. For many graduates there is no machinery that might assist them in locating a job: no job advertisements, employment bureaus, not even effective personnel departments in most quarters.

The school system itself, however, does manage in certain cases to find jobs for its graduates. For the foreign-educated returnees a special placement board was set up within the Ministry of Education. The locally educated are placed, if at all, by their individual schools, depending on the policy of the school, the resourcefulness of its director, the demands of the market, and current political emphases.

The outlook for graduates of the various specialized vocational programs has been in recent years as follows. A consistently high demand for teachers has assured jobs for graduates of the various teachers training programs. Graduates of the commercial school have been in great demand because of the increasing bureaucratization of government and the slight expansion of commerce. The public health college had great difficulty in the placement of its

* Since this was written the University's Department of Education has begun to produce a series of career pamphlets for secondary school students.

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graduates in the late fifties, but the government's implementation of a program of public health centers has opened up increasing opportunities for their employment. Graduates of the school of social work have been placed in positions with little difficulty.

On the other hand, in those areas in which the government has shown little or no interest the school authorities have been hard put to find employment for their graduates. This was shown most dramatically in the case of the now defunct community development training project at Majete, whose graduates were allowed to drift into oblivion due to the absence of an effective community development program in the country. Those who have completed courses of study in agriculture have not been extensively employed by the government because of chronic disorganization and neglect in the Ministry of Agriculture, while lack of capital and know-how has tended to keep them from private agricultural enterprise. Graduates of the technical and engineering schools have been having some difficulty in entering the work force due to the slow pace of Ethiopia's industrial development. Graduates of general academic programs, finally, and those who drop out before completing some course of study, tend to be left to their own devices.

While the modernizing sector, then, has introduced the revolutionary notion of vocation and has institutionalized means of training young Ethiopians for modern work roles, it has not yet provided adequate mechanisms either for guiding them into and through the training programs or for employing them properly once they are trained.

Preparation for Marriage

Conditions of growing up in the modernizing sector have disrupted the harmonious pattern of Amhara adolescence also with respect to entrance into adult family roles. Conflicts arise both from postponement of the normal age for marriage and from radically new ideas about the nature of marriage.

The modern adolescent typically expects to marry at an age that is at least eight to ten years older than his traditional counterpart. While Amhara girls have traditionally married in their early teens, girls in the senior class of secondary school now say they expect to marry in their early twenties. Amhara boys have traditionally married around the age of twenty, but those in post-elementary schools now expect to marry in their late twenties or early thirties.

This shift is due to a desire to attain as much education as possible, and above all, for the boys, to the precarious economic position of modern adolescents. While living on his father's farm an Amhara boy could marry early with the assurance of having enough land to work to support his family at least at subsistence level. The modern boy who finishes secondary school or

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are balanced by a fairly permissive mode of organization. For the clergy, the constraints are heavier; the fasting requirements are increased, and the priesthood involves, as we have seen, strict marital fidelity. On the other hand, the individualistic organization of the clergy is most striking.

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This individualism is conspicuous already in the church schools, which are organized not on a class basis but in a series of master-pupil relations. Students begin their courses of study whenever they arrive at the residence of the master, and proceed each at his own pace. The master spends the bulk of his time with more advanced students, who in turn are used to instruct the less advanced. The pupils are very much on their own, uncontrolled either by their families, with whom they no longer reside, nor by any formal institution. The same is true of the masters, who are not subjected to any sort of outside controls. Indeed, each teacher tends to develop his own unique method of teaching, regarding it as something of a personal monopoly.[24]

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The ministrating clergy are likewise free from controls emanating from a broad ecclesiastical organization. Each parish church functions autonomously under the direction of a head (*alaqā*) chosen by the local clergy. (Heads of the most important churches have traditionally been appointed by the emperor.) The obligations of the priesthood are not very great. The chief duty of the priest is to take his turn in performing the Mass. His pastoral services are limited to occasional visits with his particular confessants, from whom he expects to receive regular rewards of food and drink. Otherwise, his life is much the same as that of his lay neighbors.

The role of the *dabtarā*, as we have seen, is still more flexible. *Dabtarā* who are associated with a parish church are expected to take their turns singing hymns and composing *qenē* in the outer ring of the church; but otherwise they exist as free entrepreneurs, and they need not be so attached unless they so desire.

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The individualistic organization of the Ethiopian Church is most striking, perhaps, in the case of the monks, especially when compared with Christian monastic orders in the Western world. Ethiopian monks are bound by nothing other than the original conditions for assuming the role, namely, renouncing family ties and worldly possessions. The monk need not enter a monastery; he may continue to live in his old home or may take to the woods as a hermit. If he does go to live at a monastery, his life is not radically changed. The Ethiopian monastery is not an organized community, but a sacred place—the site of a large and important church, in the vicinity of which live numbers of individual monks. The monk comes and goes as he wishes, prays whenever he wants, and may live free of any obligations toward his fellow monastics and toward the rest of the society.*

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* There are, however, some monasteries where a more organized and disciplined regime may be found.

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19. Thus, an eighth-grade student in Manz explained the popularity of the Jimma Agricultural School by saying, "The boys all want to go there because it is run by the Americans, and a school run by Americans means that everything is done right—food and clothes are properly distributed, and so on."
20. Shack, *op. cit.*, p. 417.
21. In response to a question on their attitudes toward the priests, sixty juniors and seniors of Tafari Makonnen Secondary School replied as follows (1959): 40 per cent were unequivocally proclerical; 22 per cent were ambivalent, expressing awareness of both good and bad elements in the clergy; and 18 per cent were primarily anticlerical, calling the priests "incompetent," "opposed to modernization," and "not supported by the people." (The rest were no answers or noncommittal.)
22. Edith Lord, "The Impact of Education on Non-scientific Beliefs in Ethiopia," *Journal of Social Psychology*, XLVII, Second-Half (May, 1958), 339–54.
23. Cf. Talcott Parsons, *Essays in Sociological Theory* (rev. ed.; Glencoe, Ill.: Free Press, 1954), chaps. vii and xiv.
24. Cf. chap. iii, p. 89, and note 19.
25. Lord, "The Impact of Education on Non-Scientific Beliefs," typescript version, pp. 6–7.
26. A sophisticated expression of this approach to Ethiopian painting has been published by an Ethiopian student in France. Cf. Berhanu Abbaba, "La peinture éthiopienne: point de vue d'un Éthiopien," *Cahiers d'Études Africaines*, II, No. 1 (1961), 160–65.
27. For a brief account of this historic event cf. Lipsky *et al.*, *Ethiopia* (New Haven: Human Relations Area Files Press, 1962), pp. 210–12.
28. Edgar Z. Friedenberg, *The Vanishing Adolescent* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1959).
29. *Diagnosis of Our Time* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1944), chap. iii.

CHAPTER 5: *The Old and New Elites*

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2. A. Vasiliev, "Justin I (518–527) and Abyssinia," *Byzantinische Zeitschrift*, XXXIII (1933), 67–77; *Justin the First* (Harvard, 1950), pp. 299–302.
3. A. Caquot, "La royauté sacrale en Éthiopie," *Annales d'Éthiopie*, II (1957), 205–19.
4. F. Alvares, *The Prester John of the Indies*, ed. C. F. Beckingham and G. Huntingford (2 vols.; Cambridge: Hakluyt Society, 1961), I, 122.
5. "The Chronicle of the Emperor Zara Yaqob," *Ethiopia Observer*, V, No. 2 (1961), 153.
6. J. Varenbergh, *Studien zur äthiopischen Reichsordnung* (Strassburg, 1916), p. 3.
7. James Bruce, *Travels to Discover the Source of the Nile* (5 vols.; Edinburgh, 1790), III, 237.